

# HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 360 – 194 Putnam Pike  
Harmony, R.I. 02829

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on **Thursday, April 21, 2011.**

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Moderator - Raymond Fogarty, Jr.;  
Treasurer - Sandra Owens; Tax Collector - Kimberly Barber;  
Attorney - Fred Mason, Jr.  
Board Members - Louise Michaels, James Richards,  
Milton Huston & George Kain

Absent: Association Representative – John Falco, President – excused

**I. – Meeting Called to Order: 7:14 pm** by Moderator Fogarty.

**II. - Approval of the minutes from the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.**

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Everyone was provided a copy in advance for review. If there are no corrections, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

George made a motion to accept the minutes. Louise seconded the motion.  
The motion carried unanimously.

**III. – Approval of Bills:**

A check register of bills to be paid was provided to all board members in their folder. Ray and Sandy look at all bills individually and approve, before signing the checks for payment.

Milton made a motion to approve the bills. Jim seconded the motion.  
The motion carried unanimously.

**IV. - Treasurer's Report:**

Sandy presented Treasurer's reports for the months of **February & March.**

Beginning balance February 1<sup>st</sup> was \$359,877.93 and ending balance February 28<sup>th</sup> was \$340,040.12. It was a routine month except for the maintenance account being a little high.

There was a clerical error in the Treasurer's report for the month of March. Therefore it will be held for presentation until next month's meeting.

Louise made a motion to accept the **February** Treasurer's report. Milt seconded it.  
The motion carried unanimously.

#### V. - Tax Collector's Report:

Taxes receivable balance as of today's date is \$97,969.12. Taxes collected in the month of March were \$14,911.75. Collections have been good, due to the past due notices being mailed. Third party billing collected in the month of March was \$11,016.06.

The final exam for CCRI's on-line course Kim is taking, *A to Z Grant Writing*, is due on May 6<sup>th</sup>. The course began on March 16<sup>th</sup>. She has found it interesting and hopes it will be helpful in future grant writing for the district.

The next meeting of the RI Tax Collectors Association has been scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>. There has not been an agenda posted yet though, so Kim is unsure if she will be attending, since her office is so busy right now.

Today Kim participated in a 30 minute on-line webinar, *Employee Screening – Best Practices for the Fire & Rescue Industry*. This was the first time she had ever tried a webinar and found it interesting, but mostly a lot of self promotion of the sponsoring company. One item of interest that was discussed was the "Ban the Box" elimination of the question on applications "Have you ever been convicted of a felony." With this change Criminal Background Checks are still permitted, but questions are not allowed until the potential employees interview to avoid discrimination. The statistics they quoted concerning felons seemed oddly high and sources were not cited. Also discussed briefly was the new need for written policies concerning social media – Facebook, Twitter, etc. Another item that was noted was that several states; HI, OR, IL and WA included; have now banned the use of Credit Reports for pre-employment screening. Although interesting, it does not apply to us.

Jim made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's report. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

#### VI. - Chief's Report:

At the beginning of April the Chief attended an event at the RI Convention Center for the RIEDC. It was a general discussion about broadband in RI, its use in public safety and the possibility of the Harmony Fire District becoming a model for their plan. Harmony has become involved now due to involvement with the CISCO system at Bryant University over 5 years ago. Director David Smith of the RIEMA is also involved with this project.

The Chief traveled to Washington DC to attend the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI). It is sponsored by the New England Association of Fire Chiefs and the cost of attendance is \$0 to our district. The NEAFC was there to support D-Block Legislation regarding broadband and the Fire Chiefs pitched their cause to Senator Reed, Congressman Langevin, etc.

On April 12<sup>th</sup> the Harmony Fire District hosted the monthly meeting of the Woonasquatucket Valley Firemen's League.

Recently the Chief performed a fire inspection at Fogarty Elementary School.

At the April 18<sup>th</sup> Drill, Charlie Poirier, a representative from Firematic, presented a demonstration of new Jaws of Life equipment to the crew. This is an item that the Chief intends to present as a Capital Item purchase for next year's budget.

Deputy Chief Mike Segee attended a meeting to discuss a Foam/Tanker Task Force Pre-Plan Drill. There is coordination throughout the state of RI in putting together these Foam/Tanker Task Forces to

protect the 295/95 Corridor. The drill is scheduled for the on 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in June at the Smithfield Fire Department.

On March 22<sup>nd</sup> the Chief attended an Incident Command Workshop at Roger Williams. This class in conjunction with the 90/90 class on April 20<sup>th</sup> regarding fire department typing, bringing us into NIMS compliance. It is a requirement for federal grants to be in NIMS compliance. The completion of these items will further enable the “Web EOC” program in RI. RIEMA Director David Smith is working on these programs.

Engine 23 is having mechanical problems. It will be having a pump test next week. The pump packing is really leaking badly out through the shaft. George stated that the packing has been done on that truck before. Engine 23 is a 1971.

Today the Chief was working on the Glocester MEDS Plan with the RI Department of Health and they did an on-site walk through of the Ponaganset High School. He has been in many, many schools throughout RI and was very impressed by PHS. He commented several times saying what a beautiful school it is.

#### *Upcoming Events:*

Saturday 4/30 & Sunday 5/1 from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm there will be a Navigational Training Class hosted by HFD. The classroom portion will be here and practical portion using a GPS and maps at George Washington Park.

Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> is the Glocester Fire Departments Annual Banquet. Please see Kim to RSVP tonight, if you have not already done so. We also have Raffle tickets available.

Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup> is the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual HFD Annual Golf Tournament. It is going to be held at Crystal Lake Golf Course in Burrillville this year. Instead of a sit-down steak dinner they are going to have a more informal barbeque style meal.

Thank you cards were received for get well wishes sent on behalf of the district board:

Private Andy Noonan - who recently had surgery.

Chief Charlie Aldrich, retired - who has recently been ill.

Captain John Lyman, retired - who recently had surgery.

Louise made a motion to accept the Chief’s report. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **VII. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:**

Due to John’s absence there was no report available to present.

Jim asked if the Chief knew of any updates to the status of the patio project.

The Chief stated that there were no updates available for any of the ongoing projects.

Ray brought up the fact that he feels a new committee should be established to determine a “Long Term Plan” for the Harmony Fire District building and grounds. The board agreed that the committee should include at a minimum: 1 district board member & an Engineer who resides in Harmony. The Chief presented plat and lot information for the properties abutting the station, as the board had requested for review. Discussion followed regarding the abutting properties and contact with the owners in the past. The board brought up many issues that would need to be addressed by this new committee including:

- Water and septic issues.
- Parking and training areas.
- Notice to neighboring property(s) of prospective project.
- The possible purchase of abutting property(s)
- State Grants and Foundations to apply to for funding.
- The creation of a *Site Plan*.

The subject will be addressed again at the next meeting.

#### **VIII. - Committee Reports:**

##### **a. Policies & Procedures Manual – Milton, Chair**

Progress. Milt has been working on the new software template. He states that he is now at a point that he will need approximately 3-4 hours with Kim and the Chief to get the particulars for many of the policies. Items such as pay rates, employee medical exams, non- disclosure, job postings, etc. The Chief told Milt to send Kim a couple of dates and they would work something out.

Louise asked about employee medical exams. Do we have any specific requirements for our volunteers? The Chief said they we only started a physical screening program about 3 years ago. So the answer would be no. However, it is strongly recommended by VFIS to have an employee physical program in place. We did just enter a contract with Concentra Urgent Care in Greenville to do our pre-employment screenings.

Louise also asked about a smoking policy for volunteers. The board agreed that it is probably not something we could enforce with our volunteers. However, it is mandatory that paid department firefighters sign a non-smoking policy upon hire. It would be in violation of the “Heart and Lung” bill of the state of RI.

Some discussion followed.

##### **b. Charter & By-Laws Review – George, Chair**

No new updates have been received. George asked Kim to call and see if the Charter changes will be passed before our Annual meeting.

#### **IX. - Old Business:**

##### **a. Review of Boiler Replacement project.**

This line item is complete. Please remove from future agendas.

##### **b. Update of RIDOT road work in Harmony.**

Tonight the local elected officials and RI DOT are already attending the Glocester Town Council meeting. Therefore we have rescheduled their attendance at our meeting for next month. Our monthly meeting will start at 6:00 pm and our invited guests will arrive at 7:00 pm. The meeting will resume after they leave, if necessary.

The Chief stated that there were no new updates on the letter that he submitted to the Glocester Public Safety Commission on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **X. - New Business:**

##### **a. Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Budget –**

The budget will be discussed at the 6:00 pm meeting monthly meeting, May 19<sup>th</sup>. A budget worksheet will be e-mailed by Sandy to the board members prior to this meeting for their review.

George is on a town committee that just had a RISE study done at the town hall and highway garage. They have accomplished a significant savings to the town. It would be at no cost to the fire district. Louise commented that we had them come in before and that's how we got the windows and other items replaced. The Chief said that an Energy Study was done back in approximately 2001. George stated that he thinks we can have it redone every 8-10 years. He will get in contact with National Grid to have the Energy Study scheduled. Some discussion followed. The board thought it was a great idea.

George asked if we had any dry hydrant money left in the budget. Sandy replied that that money was gone long ago. The reason that George had asked was that he had noticed that the dry hydrants within the district were looking bad. The Chief agreed that they do need painting. The dry hydrant on Peterson's property would require a police traffic detail in order to do it. Two other hydrants will be repaired with FEMA funds. The other ones will not be an issue to get done. Ray suggested that a regular maintenance schedule be set up. The Chief said we have approximately eight dry hydrants total.

George said that he had noticed Potterville Fire Department had received a grant recently from FM Global. He asked if we would be applying to them for any grant funds. The Chief replied that we had received a joint fire prevention grant with the West Gloucester Fire District just a couple of years ago and neither of our departments can apply again for 10 years.

**XI. - Public Input:** No audience.

**XII. – Executive Session:** None called.

**XIII. – Adjournment:**

Milt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The January meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **8:21 pm**.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board  
is scheduled for **Thursday, 6:00 pm, May 19, 2011** at the Harmony Fire Department.

Local elected officials will be invited to arrive at **7:00 pm**.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly S. Barber".

Kimberly S. Barber  
Tax Collector/Secretary